

2009-05

# Transitioning to a 'Distant' Library

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<https://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/94432>

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# Transitioning to a ‘Distant’ Library

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## Introduction

In January 2008, the School of Dentistry and the University Library announced that the Dentistry Library would be closed and its collections consolidated with those of the Taubman Medical Library (TML). Taubman would now serve the School of Dentistry (SOD), as well as Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy.

The move of the physical collection was a significant undertaking, but so too was the ‘move’ to a virtual site. We made a special effort to make people feel comfortable with the change, and to remind them that the print collection was still available, as was staff to assist with reference and instruction.

## Preliminary Efforts

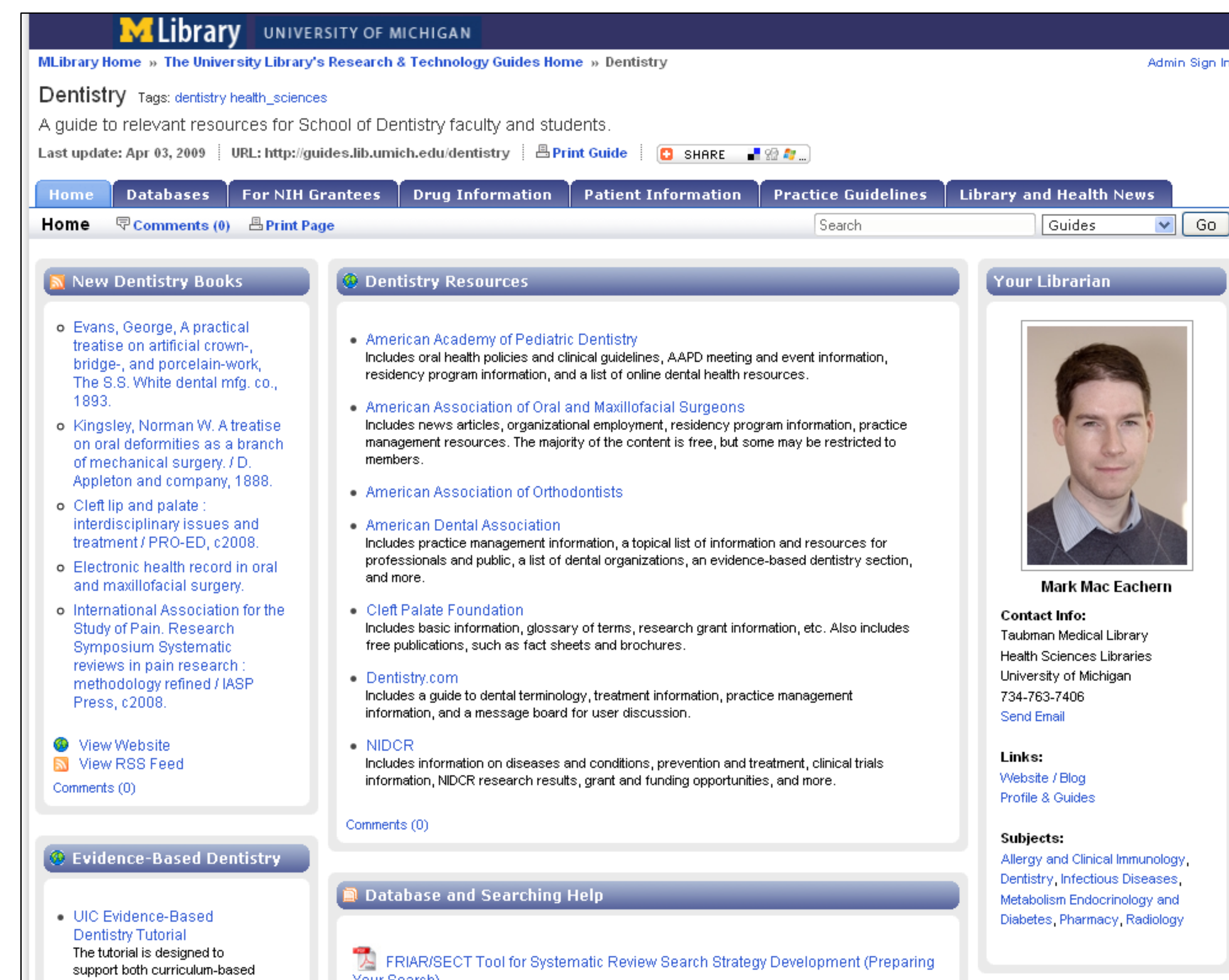
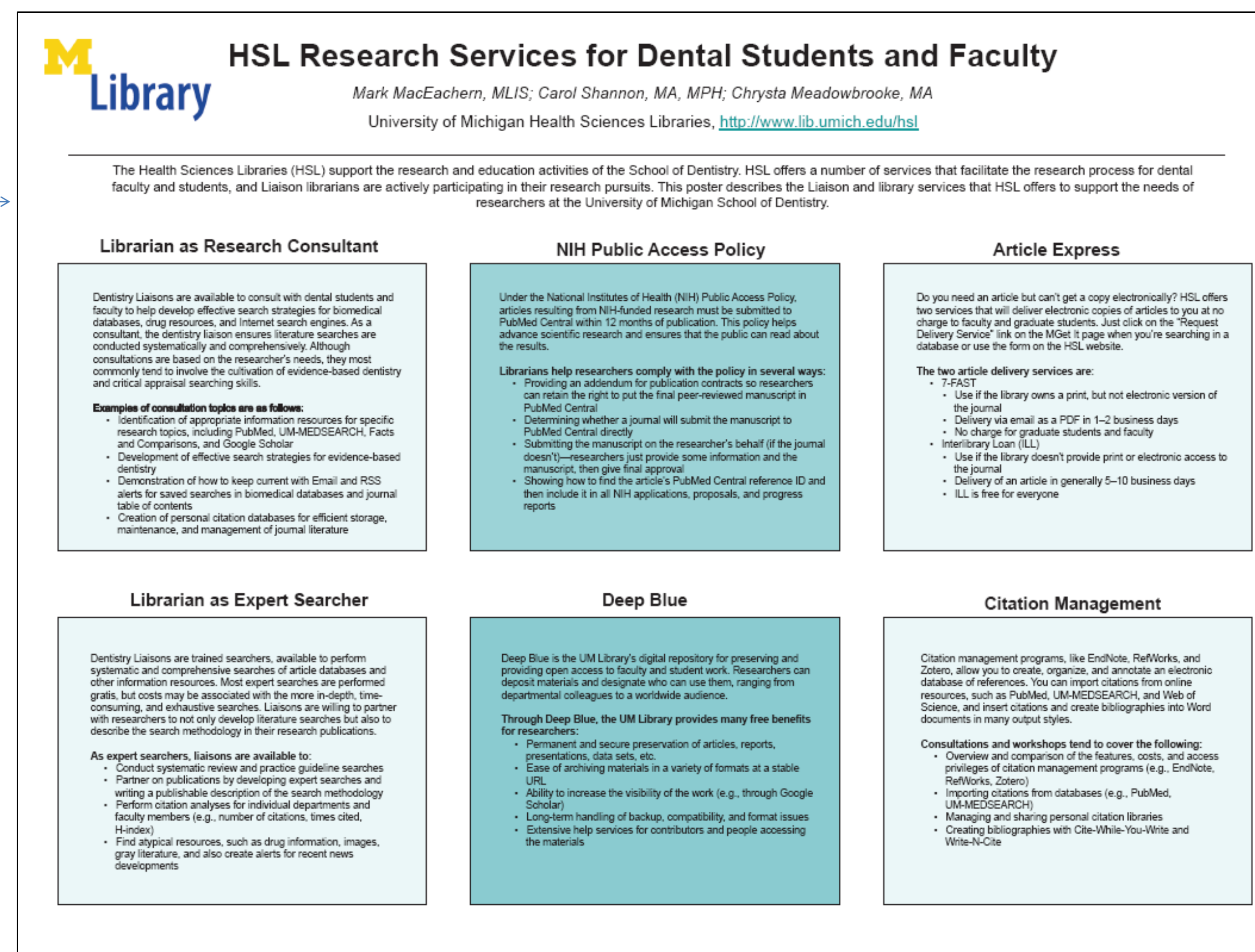
**Communication:** The existing Dentistry Library blog and the LCD monitor system within the Dental Building were used to communicate with faculty, staff, and students.

**Survey:** The HSL conducted a SurveyMonkey survey of dentistry library patrons to learn what services and resources they wanted during the transition and afterwards. Many of the questions were open-ended, and participants were encouraged to state their concerns and questions.

**Social Event:** Faculty and staff were invited to a reception at the TML for light refreshments and informal tours of the library.

**Poster:** To continue to promote HSL involvement with Dentistry patrons, the liaisons presented for the first time a poster at the SOD’s Research Day.

**7-FAST:** This free service provides patrons with a PDF of articles available only in print in the UM libraries, via email. This service helps alleviate travel inconvenience associated with the more distant library.



## Online Activities

**LibGuides:** Liaisons used the subject guide platform, LibGuides, to create a dentistry-specific space on the HSL website. The guide includes links to the most commonly used Dental resources. Students are introduced to the guide during instruction sessions and orientations.

**CTools:** To enhance the library’s support of the Dental Hygiene (DH) distance program, liaisons were incorporated into the course site for Dental Hygiene courses with research requirements via a Meebo widget and a Librarian-related discussion forum.

**Dentistry Website:** In December 2008, the HSL was invited to create a section of the new Drupal-based dentistry website. The section includes the two Dentistry liaisons images and contact information, as well as general library resources and services of interest to the Dental community.

## Future Activities

The removal of the physical dental collection from the dental building created an increased need for liaison integration. To create new opportunities, the liaisons will:

- Continue to serve on the SOD Curriculum Committee and attend faculty meetings
- Develop an increased and more systematic presence in the D1-D4 and Dental Hygiene curricula, emphasizing evidence-based dentistry and the necessary identification, searching, and critical appraisal skills.
- Use the eight-module Information Skills Curriculum document that the liaisons developed to serve as a foundation for information-skills instruction in the curriculum. The document describes the educational interventions the liaisons offer.
- Provide office hours in the Dental Building for research consultations, meetings, and to create networking opportunities.